

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAGU 00525 022156Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04
NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00
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TRSE-00 HA-05 /068 W
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O R 022107Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5593
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 0525

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, SHUM, NU
SUBJECT: NATIONAL STRIKE DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY: SIXTEEN NICARAGUAN PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS ISSUED FEB 1 A STATEMENT DENOUNCING THE LACK OF PROGRESS IN THE INVESTIGATION OF THE ASSASSINATION OF PEDRO J. CHAMORRO, THE ABSENCE OF INFORMATION ON CAMPESINOS WHO HAVE DISAPPEARED, THE GAGGING OF THE COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA, AND VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THEY ALSO CALLED FOR A GOVERNMENT WITH POPULAR AND MORAL SUPPORT. THE RESOLVE OF PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES WAS APPARENTLY STIFFENED BY THE WALKOUT OF MANY NATIONAL BANK AND MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE EMPLOYEES. THE INCREASINGLY MILITANT BEHAVIOR OF WORKERS, BOTH IN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE FIRMS, INDICATES WORK STOPPAGE IS EVOLVING FROM BEING MOSTLY A LOCKOUT INTO BECOMING A GENUINE STRIKE. END SUMMARY.

1. SIXTEEN LEADING NICARAGUAN PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE NICARAGUAN DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE (INDE) AND THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRIES, AND CONSTRUCTION, ISSUED ON FEB 1 A STATEMENT THAT READS IN INFORMAL TRANSLATION:

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PAGE 02 MANAGU 00525 022156Z

"THE EXTRAORDINARY CIVIC EVENTS THAT NICRAGUA IS EXPERIENCING ARE THE APPEAL THAT AN ENTIRE PEOPLE IS MAKING IN A DESPERATE SHOULD FOR JUSTICE AND LIBERTY.

"THE ASSASSINATION OF DR. PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO CARDENAL HAS STILL NOT BEEN CLEARED. THERE IS NO INFORMATION ON THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE

CAMPESINOS WHO HAVE DISAPPEARED. THE COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA ARE BEING GAGGED WITHOUT A STATE OF SIEGE, AND HUMAN RIGHTS ARE BEING ABUSED IN EVERY WAY.

"THE STAND THAT WE HAVE TAKEN, TOGETHER WITH LABOR, RELIGIOUS, AND POLITICAL SECTORS AND THE PEOPLE IN GENERAL IS A PLEBISCITE IN FULL SUPPORT OF THE STRUCTURING OF A GOVERNMENT WITH POPULAR AND MORAL SUPPORT, AND RESPECTFUL OF LAW, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND THE INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON.

"IN THIS CIVIC ACTION, THAT IS GROWING EVERY DAY, IT IS FITTING TO RECOGNIZE THE GESTURE OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE JOINED THE WORKSTOPPAGE. THEIR VALOR AND SACRIFICE WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUCCESS OF THE GOALS THAT WE ARE SEEKING.

"IN A COMPLETE SPIRIT OF UNITY, WE REAFFIRM OUR CONFIDENCE THAT THE NICARAGUAN PEOPLE WILL ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS OF PEACE, JUSTICE AND LIBERTY".

2. ACCORDING TO A CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SOURCE, THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRIES WENT INTO THE MEETING WITH THE INTENTION OF PROPOSING A COMPROMISE BY WHICH THEY WOULD CALL AN END TO THE STRIKE IN EXCHANGE FOR CONCESSIONS THAT MIGHT BE ACCEPTABLE

TO SOMOZA, SUCH AS THE ABOLITION OF THE LAW OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY, THE RADIO AND TV CODE, AND A PROMISE THAT NO REPRISALS WOULD BE TAKEN
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PAGE 03 MANAGU 00525 022156Z

AGAINST THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE WORK STOPPAGE. THE COMPROMISE PROPOSAL, HOWEVER, WAS APPARENTLY DEFEATED BY THE MAJORITY, WHICH INSTEAD ADOPTED THE TOUGH STATEMENT QUOTED ABOVE. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, THE RESOLVE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES TO CONTINUE THE STRIKE WAS STIFFENED BY THE ARRIVAL AT THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUILDING AND AT THE INDE BUILDING OF, RESPECTIVELY, 140 EMPLOYEES OF THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED NATIONAL BANK OF NICARAGUA AND SEVERAL HUNDRED EMPLOYEES OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WHO ANNOUNCED THAT THEY HAD GONE ON STRIKE. A DELEGATION OF FIFTEEN REPRESENTING THE EMPLOYEES OF THE JULIO MARTINEZ COMMERCIAL FIRM (1,000 EMPLOYEES) ALSO APPEARED AND DECLARED THAT THEY WOULD NOT COMPLY WITH MANAGEMENT'S DECISION TO RETURN TO WORK. LATER, THERE WERE UNCONFIRMED REPORTS THAT THE EMPLOYEES OF TWO LOAN AND SAVINGS FIRMS, NIAPSA, OWNED BY THE SEVILLA SOMOZA FAMILY, AND CAPSA, CONTROLLED BY THE SOMOZA-OWNED BANCO DE CENTROAMERICA, HAD ALSO JOINED THE STRIKE. MORE DETAILED INFO ON STRIKE CONDITIONS WILL BE SENT SEPTTEL.

COMMENT: WHILE THERE HAS BEEN SOME WEAKENING OF THE GENERAL WORK STOPPAGE IN THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR, THE DEFECTION OF NATIONAL BANK AND MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE EMPLOYEES, FOLLOWING THAT OF CENTRAL BANK EMPLOYEES EARLIER HAS GIVEN RENEWED HOPE TO STRIKE SUPPORTERS.

APART FROM THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT WORKERS JOINING THE
WORK STOPPAGE, THE STRIKE BY NATIONAL AND CENTRAL BANKS EMPLOYEES
COULD DEPRIVE THE GOVERNMENT OF THE MEANS TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE
COMMERCIAL BANKS. THE INCREASINGLY MILITANT BEHAVIOR OF WORKERS,
BOTH IN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISES, ALSO INDICATES THAT THE
WORK STOPPAGE IS EVOLVING FROM BEING MOSTLY A LOCKOUT INTO BECOMING
A GENUINE STRIKE, ALTHOUGH IT HAS ALWAYS HAD ELEMENTS OF BOTH.
SOME SOURCES BELIEVE THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE
SUPPORTING THE WORK STOPPAGE ARE NO LONGER IN A POSITION TO END
IT IN AN ORDERLY MANNER.
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STATEMENT DENOUNCING THE LACK OF PROGRESS IN THE
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